

Remarks

Reconsideration of the first Office action is requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Prior to entry of the above amendments, claims 1-66 were pending and were rejected in the Office action. By the above amendments, independent claims 1, 52, 61, and 66 are amended and new claims 67-86 are added.

As an initial matter, Applicants want to thank the Examiner for her time and comments during a telephone interview with Applicants' undersigned attorney on August 23, 2004. In the interview, the cited reference to Edlund was discussed. In particular, it was discussed that the cited reference is directed to a feedstock delivery system that produces a gaseous feed stream as a liquid hydrocarbon is bubbled through a volume of water. In contrast, Applicants' attorney explained that the present claims are directed to feedstock delivery systems with reservoirs or other mixing chambers that receive and produce liquid streams. It was agreed that clarifying amendments could be made to the originally submitted claims to recite this distinction. It was also agreed that the rejections of the claims that recite an emulsifier would be withdrawn since the gas-liquid system of the cited reference fails to disclose or suggest the use of an emulsifier.

Before turning to the amended claims, Applicants also want to acknowledge that twenty new dependent claims have been added in the above amendments. Even though it was discussed in the interview that at least ten new claims would be added, Applicants apologize in advance for any inconvenience the addition of these claims causes. Applicants believe that the dependent nature of all of the new claims and the similar subject matter of many of the dependent claims should minimize the time

required to consider these additional claims. The claims largely further recite that the triggering events recited in the original independent claims may correspond to gravimetric or volumetric quantities of the individual and/or total amounts of the liquids delivered to or present in the corresponding reservoirs or mixing chambers recited in the independent claims. Additional ones of the new dependent claims are intended to clarify that the liquid-based stream that is withdrawn from the corresponding reservoir, mixing chamber or the like may be (but is not required to be) vaporized after removal from the reservoir, mixing chamber, etc.

Applicants have studied the cited references, as well as the reasons expressed in the Office action for rejecting the claims. Applicants respectfully disagree that the originally claimed subject matter was disclosed or suggested by the cited reference. However, and as discussed above, Applicants have agreed to make clarifying amendments to the claims. By the above amendments, each of the original independent claims has been amended to recite, in relevant part, that the feedstock delivery system receives liquid streams of water and carbon-containing feedstock and produces therefrom a feed stream for a fuel processor, with the feed stream being withdrawn from the reservoir or other portion of the feedstock delivery system as a liquid stream. Applicants submit that the primary cited, and commonly owned, reference does not disclose or suggest such a liquid-liquid system. Instead, the cited reference is directed to a feedstock delivery system that produces a gaseous feed stream by bubbling a gaseous hydrocarbon through a volume of water. The Examiner's point is well-taken that it is within the disclosure of the cited reference to deliver the gaseous hydrocarbon to the water tank as a pressurized liquid, with this stream returning to its natural gas phase upon release into the

lower pressure environment of the water tank. However, the presently pending claims each recite feedstock delivery systems that are distinct from the above-described system of the cited reference.

In view of this distinction, Applicants are not presenting a detailed discussion of each additional aspect of the claims that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited references. Illustrative examples of this subject matter include the previously discussed emulsion, as well as the surfactant and emulsion-producing and mixing structures, the mechanisms by which the predetermined mix ratios of the feedstock components are established, the construction of the reservoirs and/or mixing chambers, the distinction between the heated exhaust vent of the cited reference and the liquid vent of the present disclosure, etc. Should the Examiner want to discuss any of these elements or receive a detailed explanation of the distinctions, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney. Similarly, should the Examiner have any questions or identify any remaining issues, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Drawing Amendments

Enclosed with this Amendment is one annotated drawing sheet with a marked-up version of Fig. 7. The indicated figure contains a proposed amendment shown in red ink. Applicants submit that the proposed amendment does not add any new matter, and instead merely includes a reference numeral for structure recited in the original specification. Upon acceptance of the proposed drawing amendment, Applicants will submit a new formal drawing that includes this amendment.